

March 13, 1974

Now, there is a new kitchen facility which I worked to get the appropriations, \$274,500. Also, there is money available for the air conditioning of this building. This will be used for the veterans but the Northeast Regional Center will still be there. Their offices will be in this building. But the problem arises now that the veterans say we have more veterans than we do people in the Regional Center. And to qualify for those payments, this building must be in their title. Now, let me explain in simple language. We can forget this bill and I'm leaving this up to your wisdom. We can forget this bill and the taxpayers probably will pay somewhere and I can dig out the figures but in the back in my mind about \$125,000. But the question will be when it is brought up to the veterans and we know how the federal people act or react, this building was originally set up in the construction of the kitchen facilities, etc. to be used by the veterans. And now we are turning it to that position. There is no effort to close the Regional Center. Those facilities will be used. There is appropriations asked for by the Governor's office. We have discussed this thing in detail many times. I've spent many hours, many days, I've been on campus up there different times. I'm afraid we might lose the veterans facilities up there. I'm serious. It was not easy to encourage them to set up those facilities. That setup is now in, I think, good shape. But let me say the people that are disturbed that are working in that particular campus might lose some jobs if we went this route and I'm very serious. If we didn't pass this bill, and I'm not threatening, I'm just saying the possibility, if we lose the veterans facilities in Northeast Nebraska and again I do not know what the federal people will say but I do know what they have said. And just recently. We have an opportunity to keep those facilities for both parties included and there'll be opportunities for more labor, not less. But if we disagree and do not use these facilities in the best cooperation and this Legislature shall decide, this Legislature shall decide what to do. I would be happy for any questions. I've spent six years on the project. I'm real pleased to say the Northeast Regional Center is operating, to me, I think in real good shape and real good hands. The veterans are pleased with their operation up there, the new kitchen facilities are just being completed, there is money to re...to air condition. We have asked for appropriation money to do again what we planned six years ago, four years ago, two years ago, that those buildings may be used successfully for the taxpayers in the State of Nebraska. Now, I would be happy to be questioned in detail, if necessary, but I am leaving this up to the wisdom of you fellows in the Legislature because you can transfer that back and forth from the veterans to the Regional Center or from the Regional Center to the veterans. That is your privilege. We are selling the land. It's only state agencies that we might help the taxpayers keep from building a new facility or moving the veterans to Scottsbluff or wherever. I hope you will ask questions, very seriously, because I think in my wisdom I would like to see the Northeast Regional Center stay in Northeast Nebraska and stay open. And I would like to see the veterans stay there and the two can cooperate and are cooperating.

PRESIDENT: Senator Kennedy, at the risk of the Chair giving you some trouble, I don't know whether I ever heard you say you wanted to refer LB1052 to a committee....

(End of Belt #1A)